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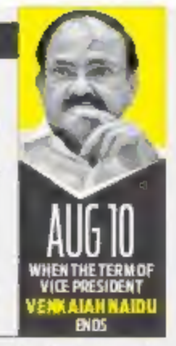
V-P ELECTION ON AUGUST 6

The Election Commission on Wednesday finalised the schedule for **16th Vice-Presidential Election**

The voting and counting of votes, if needed, will be held on the same day

Electoral College comprises 233 elected members of the Rajya Sabha, 12 nominated members of the Rajya Sabha, and 543 elected members of the Lok Sabha, making it a total of 788 members



According to sources, the BJP-led NDA is likely to field a Muslim face for V-P, with Kerala governor Arif Mohammad Khan being the front-runner. Former Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi's name is also doing the rounds

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TAILOR MURDER

Pakistan angle emerges in Udaipur horror

RAJESH ASNANI @ Jaipur

AN international angle emerged in the barbaric killing of Udaipur tailor Kanhaiya Lal by two Islamists on Tuesday. Initial probe by the National Investigation Agency and Rajasthan police revealed that one of the killers has links with an extremist Sunni group in Pakistan and had undergone training there a few years ago.

"Ghouse Mohammad has links with Karachi-based Dawat-e-Islami," said Rajasthan DGP M L Lather. The possibility of the second killer, Riyaz Jabbar, too having terror links can't be ruled out, he added. Both the culprits were arrested on Tuesday and booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Three others have also been detained for their alleged involvement in the heinous crime.

Confirming the international terror link, Rajasthan home minister Rajendra Yadav said Mohammad went to Karachi in 2014 and stayed there for 45 days. The mobile numbers of several people in Pakistan and some Arab countries were stored on his phone and he was in constant touch with 10 persons in Pakistan. "The Udaipur killing was carried out to spread instability and create an atmosphere of fear and riots," the minister added.

The Union Home Ministry has directed the NIA to take over the investigation. P10

Uddhav throws in the towel

Quits after SC refuses to stay floor test; BJP expected to stake its claim to run the state

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Mumbai/ New Delhi

MAHARASHTRA Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray threw in the towel on Wednesday night as he resigned shortly after the Supreme Court refused to stay a scheduled floor test on Thursday, capping a day of intense drama. Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari had directed him to take the confidence vote in the Assembly in the wake of a big rebellion in the Shiv Sena.

The BJP now has a clear advantage, with former chief minister Devendra Fadnavis expected to meet the Governor soon to stake his claim to form the new government citing support from the Sena rebels.

Announcing his resignation in a Facebook live address, Uddhav said, "We respect the Supreme Court judgment. Democracy must be followed." He then went to Raj Bhavan to submit his resignation both as CM and member of the legislative assembly, which was promptly accepted by Koshyari.

"My own people do not want me continue as CM. Sena and Sena supremo Balasaheb Thackeray made these people big. They were commoners; Sena gave them honour and positions, but they left me and pulled down my government," a hurt Uddhav rued.

The day began with the Governor directing him to take a confidence vote in the Assembly at 11 am on Thursday. Sena's chief whip Sunil Prabhu challenged it in the SC, since it had stayed the operation of disqualification notices to 16 rebels issued by the deputy speaker till July 12.

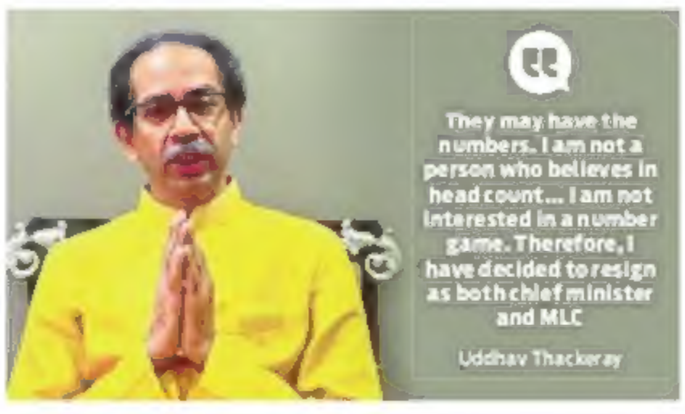
The SC began hybrid hearing of the petition at 5 pm and pronounced its interim order at 9 pm. It said the result of the vote on Thursday will be subject to its verdict on July 11, when it will decide whether a section of MLAs from the Sena should be disqualified.

During oral hearing, a vacation bench comprising judges Surya Kant and JB Pardiwala said, "We don't think the matter will become infructuous. Suppose if we find later that floor test was conducted without authority, we can annul it. It is not irreversible."

The court also allowed jailed NCP MLAs Nawab Malik and Anil Deshmukh to participate in the floor test.

Shinde's side argued that the Uddhav faction is in a hopeless minority within the party and a floor test would be the best way to stop horse-trading. Senior advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for Prabhu, said people who have changed sides do not reflect the will of people and heavens won't fall if the floor test is not held on Thursday.

In the evening, the Shinde camp came closer home as they parked themselves in Goa, another BJP-ruled state. P9,10


They may have the numbers. I am not a person who believes in head count... I am not interested in a number game. Therefore, I have decided to resign as both chief minister and MLC
Uddhav Thackeray

CABINET CLEARS RENAMING AURANGABAD

In his last decision as CM, the Uddhav cabinet on Wednesday approved proposals to rename two districts — Aurangabad as Sambhaji Nagar and Osamanabad as Dharashiv. It was his attempt to retake the Hindutva plank that got diluted within the Aghadi. But, it cannot be implemented since the government has fallen

Restaurants allowed to open 24/7 in some areas

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

FROM now on, hotels and restaurants across the state can open 24x7 in select locations. The long pending proposal which was placed by the hotels and restaurants association was accepted on Wednesday.

Home Minister **Araga Jnanendra** on Wednesday said hotels and restaurants located in important and select locations — like near bus depots, railway stations, inter-state bus terminals and other spaces — where there is high public movement, can be kept open round the clock. The police will also ensure protection to them through the night. While members of hotel and restaurant associations have accepted the order and the statement from the minister, they also said that it is not new. They added that they were now awaiting written government orders, which will be circulated to all the commercial establishments to be stuck on their wall for safety reasons.

A member of the hotel association said it was always permitted to keep hotels and restaurants open around such spaces, but they would not be open as there was no police security and permission. But now with the minister's orders, there will be no problems. The members also demanded that the government also give permission for keeping hotels and restaurants open in areas where there are hospitals, markets and tourism round the clock or at least till 3 am so that there is no inconvenience to the people. P4

TAKE YOUR SHOT

June 28 **11,79,381 doses**
June 29 **12,49,839 doses**
TOTAL: 107,60,22,570

NATIONWIDE	JUNE 28	JUNE 29
Fresh cases	11,793	14,506
Recoveries	9,486	11,574
Deaths	27	30

KARNATAKA	JUNE 28	JUNE 29
Fresh cases	968	1,249
Recoveries	337	1,164
Deaths	1	12

EXPRESS READ

GST Council hikes rates on several goods, services

The GST Council has increased tax rates on several items at its meeting in Chandigarh. With this, rates on several goods and services will go up. With the removal of exemption on certain items, prepacked and labelled meat, except frozen, fish, curd, paneer, honey, dried leguminous vegetables, dried makhana, wheat and other cereals, wheat or meslin flour, jaggery, puffed rice (muri), all goods and organic manure and coir pith compost will now attract a 5% tax from July 18. P13

Single-use plastic ban to be enforced from July 1

Bengaluru: Come July 1, 2022, there will be a nationwide ban on single-use plastic. While Karnataka had banned the use of plastic since 2016, an order issued by the Central Pollution Control Board has given the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board more teeth to enforce restrictions on border areas. KSPCB has also prepared a list of items which will be banned. P2

2 killed, 2 suffer burns as relative sets home afire

Yadgir: Two people died and two others suffered burns when their relative set a house ablaze at Narayanapur of Yadgir district. The accused Sharanappa has been arrested. Sharanappa and his wife Huligemma were living separately. Sharanappa was insisting on a divorce but his wife did not agree. He invited his father-in-law and three other relatives of his wife to his house in Narayanapur on the pretext of holding talks to settle the dispute and set the house on fire P5

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